

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A uniform interface for configuring and managing a plurality of
2 different types of network devices, comprising:

3 a library containing generic commands that can be applied to said
4 network devices; and

5 a plurality of plug-in modules that can register with said library, each
6 of said modules operating to convert at least some of said generic commands into
7 device-specific commands and providing said device-specific commands to
8 individual devices of a type that are associated with the module.

1 2. The system of claim 1 wherein said plug-in modules transmit each
2 of said commands in accordance with a transmission protocol specific to the
3 individual devices, respectively.

1 3. The system of claim 2 wherein one of said transmission protocols
2 comprises Telnet.

1 4. The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands
2 establishes a connection to a network device through which configuration
3 commands can be sent and information can be retrieved.

1 5. The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands
2 retrieves the current configuration of a network device by executing appropriate
3 commands on the device.

1 6. The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands
2 post-processes configuration information retrieved from a device to render said
3 information suitable for storage and saves it to a local file system.

1 7. The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands ,
2 puts a device into a mode where it can accept configuration commands through an
3 established connection at an enabled level.

1 8. The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands
2 gives a device a complete configuration based on information from a stored
3 configuration file.

1 9. The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands
2 puts a device into its most privileged level through an established connection to
3 the device.

1 10. The system of claim 1 wherein said library is responsive to the
2 receipt of a command for a given device to determine the module that corresponds
3 to said device and provide the received command to said module.

1 11. The system of claim 1 wherein said modules convert responses
2 received from the individual devices with which they are associated into a generic
3 format for presentation to said library.

1 12. A method for configuring and managing a plurality of different
2 types of network devices, comprising:

3 establishing a library of generic commands that can be applied to said
4 network devices;

5 registering a plurality of plug-in modules with said library, each of said
6 modules operating to convert at least some of said generic commands into device-
7 specific commands;

8 receiving commands for a given device;

9 determining the module that corresponds to said device and forwarding
10 the received commands to said module; and
11 providing said device-specific commands from said module to said
12 given device.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein said plug-in modules transmit
2 each of said commands in accordance with a transmission protocol specific to the
3 individual devices, respectively.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein one of said transmission
2 protocols comprises Telnet.

1 15. The system of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands
2 establishes a connection to a network device through which configuration
3 commands can be sent and information can be retrieved.

1 16. The system of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands
2 retrieves the current configuration of a network device by executing appropriate
3 commands on the device.

1 17. The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands
2 post-processes configuration information retrieved from a device to render said
3 information suitable for storage and saves it to a local file system.

1 18. The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands ,
2 puts a device into a mode where it can accept configuration commands through an
3 established connection at an enabled level.

1 19. The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands
2 gives a device a complete configuration based on information from a stored
3 configuration file.

1 20. The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands
2 puts a device into its most privileged level through an established connection to
3 the device.

1 21. The method of claim 12 wherein said modules convert responses
2 received from the individual devices with which they are associated into a generic
3 format for presentation to said library.